



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
-----------------	-------------	----------------------	---------------------	------------------

10/820,431

04/07/2004

R. Jeffrey Jordan

IGT1P327/AC055

7182

79646

7590

02/03/2009

Weaver Austin Villeneuve & Sampson LLP - IGT

Attn: IGT

P.O. Box 70250

Oakland, CA 94612-0250

EXAMINER

HOEL, MATTHEW D

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3714

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

02/03/2009

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/820,431	Applicant(s) JORDAN ET AL.	
	Examiner Matthew D. Hoel	Art Unit 3714	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 11/13/2008.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5, 10-19, 21, 23 and 24 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5, 10-18, 21, 23 and 24 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

3. Claims 1 to 3 and 16 to 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Burns, et al. (U.S. pre-grant publication 2002/0034977 A1) in view of Gatto, et al. (U.S. pre-grant publication 2003/0078094 A1).

4. As to Claim 1: '977 teaches a service center coupled to a gaming network and to an automatic teller network (Fig. 1). '977 has a player identifier structured to validate a user as a holder of a player account on the gaming network (cash-out slips that maintain an account of the player's winnings, Abst.). '977 has a ticket reader (bar code reader 304, Fig. 1; cash-out slips with bar codes, Figs. 2-4). '977 has a verifier coupled to the player identifier and the ticket reader, and structured to validate a ticket that is

Art Unit: 3714

inserted into the ticket reader (validity of coupons verified, Para. 15). '977 has a payment dispenser structured to eject an amount of value after the ticket is validated (automatic currency dispenser, Para. 20). Regarding the new limitation, '977 teaches validating a ticket of an authorized holder (player tracking enabled by insertion of room key or card or player identification card, player subsequently tracked when slip cashed out as slip is tied to player, Para. 19). '094, however, teaches validating the authorized holder of a ticket before giving credit. '094 teaches an ATM with a keypad input which would be capable of accepting a PIN (Para. 37). The player's winnings can be stored in a bank account accessible by an ATM (Para. 41; account credited, Para. 43; bankcard, Para. 45). '094 also teaches the ticket issued by a gaming machine and presented by the player at the service center. The coded ticket of '094 may be delivered by an automatic teller device in exchange for remitted cash or other form of electronic money. A coded ticket may also be printed by a gaming machine when the player wishes to offload his or her credit balance and/or winnings; the player may redeem his or her credit balance via an automatic teller device, or alternatively may upload the credit on another gaming machine (Abst.). At step 1013 (Fig. 10), when the player wishes to cash out, the gaming machine 600 prints out a coded ticket 100 bearing at least the player's new balance, the machine-readable code 108 and the human-readable verification code 106; the player may then take the coded ticket 100 and redeem the printed credit balance for cash or some form of electronic money at the ATM 500 (Paras. 14, 15, 43, & 44). Any ATM transaction would require a player to be validated by a PIN before the transaction went through. This is evidenced for the gaming arts by

Small (U.S. patent 4,699,730 A), Figs. 1 to 7, which show the use of PINS for ATM transactions. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to apply the validation of '094 to the system of '977. The player of '977 can obtain credit for game play from an ATM (Para. 20), which would require a PIN to validate the player. Bell (5,505,461) applied below for the reporting of tax winnings would require the player to present some form of identification or validation of the player since winnings would be reported to the IRS. Not dispensing credit until after the player is verified would ensure that credit is given to the player who actually won it and that the correct player is taxed for the winnings. A bearer-instrument ticket fraudulently redeemed could result in one party receiving the winnings and another party reported as owing taxes on them. The validation of an authorized holder of the ticket would have the effect and advantage of preventing the cashout ticket from being a bearer instrument and assure that only the player who actually won the money actually receives it. It would also have the advantage of allowing the player to retain the winnings in an account rather than just receiving cash or credit for game play.

5. As to Claim 2: '977 teaches a bill validator (paper currency reader 204, Para. 39).

6. As to Claim 3: '977 teaches a ticket printer (bar code printer 208, Fig. 1).

7. As to Claim 16: '977 teaches a method of servicing a player account, comprising accepting an input at a station that is coupled to a gaming network (Fig. 1), identifying a player having an account based on the input (Para. 19), accepting a ticket at a ticket reader (bar code reader at change station, Para. 50), verifying the authenticity of the ticket (Para. 51), providing something of value to the player (Para. 51), and recording

Art Unit: 3714

that the ticket has been redeemed (complete accounting of player accounts, Para. 19).

Regarding the new limitation, '977 teaches validating a ticket of an authorized holder (player tracking enabled by insertion of room key or card or player identification card, player subsequently tracked when slip cashed out as slip is tied to player, Para. 19).

The new limitations of Claim 16 are addressed in the rejection of Claim 1. '094 also teaches the ticket issued by a gaming machine and presented by the player at the service center. The coded ticket of '094 may be delivered by an automatic teller device in exchange for remitted cash or other form of electronic money. A coded ticket may also be printed by a gaming machine when the player wishes to offload his or her credit balance and/or winnings; the player may redeem his or her credit balance via an automatic teller device, or alternatively may upload the credit on another gaming machine (Abst.). At step 1013 (Fig. 10), when the player wishes to cash out, the gaming machine 600 prints out a coded ticket 100 bearing at least the player's new balance, the machine-readable code 108 and the human-readable verification code 106; the player may then take the coded ticket 100 and redeem the printed credit balance for cash or some form of electronic money at the ATM 500 (Paras. 14, 15, 43, & 44). The station of '977 is not a gaming device (300, Fig. 1, Para. 49).

8. As to Claim 17: '977 is able to add value to a player account (Para. 20).

9. As to Claim 18: The cashier station of '977 is able to eject winnings in the form of currency (Para. 20).

10. As to Claim 19: '977 is able to provide something of value by printing another ticket from the station (pre-printed free play coupons, Para. 13).

11. Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over '977 and '094 in view of Bell, et al. (U.S. patent 5,505,461 A).

12. As to Claim 4: The combination of '977 and '094 discloses all of the elements of Claim 4, but lacks specificity as to printing a tax form. '461, however, teaches printing a tax form when a player cashes out his or her winnings (Abst., Fig. 2). It would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to apply the tax form of '461 to the combination of '977 and '094. It is widely known in the art that casinos retain the Social Security numbers of their patrons to report their winnings to the IRS, as well as to monitor transactions for possible money laundering. The advantage of this combination would be to automate the printing of the tax forms to make the tax reporting more efficient for the casino as well as the winners.

13. Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over '977 and '094 in view of Sarbin, et al. (U.S. patent 5,179,517 A).

14. As to Claim 5: The combination of '977 and '094 discloses all of the elements of Claims 5 and 23, but does not disclose the player identifier being structured to validate the user as an employee. '517, however, discloses an electronic identification card as being a casino employee identification card (Fig. 6, 94, 8:26-32). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have applied the employee identification card of '517 to the combination of '977 and '094. This could be done by issuing employees there own employee identification cards,

Art Unit: 3714

which would otherwise be identical to player identification cards except for the codes stored on them. '977 in Para. 20 discusses a Cashier's Station where players go to cash in their cash-out slips or tickets; these can be operated by an attendant (300, Para. 49). One of ordinary skill in the art would appreciate that access to these stations would be preferably restricted to casino employees to prevent fraudulent activity on the part of patrons, or even casino employees not assigned to that particular station or that particular shift. The employee identification card would thus have the advantage of protecting the casino from possible fraud.

15. Claim 10 to 15, 21, and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over '977 and '094 in view of Uihlein, et al. (6,409,595 B1).

16. As to Claim 10: The combination of '977 and '094 discloses all of the limitations of Claim 10, but lacks specificity as to determining that the player has a separate player account. '977 teaches a standalone service center that is coupled to a gaming network (Fig. 1). '977 presents transaction choices to a user and accepts a selected choice (Figs. 5a,b). '977 verifies an identity of a user having a player account (player identification card, Para. 47). '977 accepts a ticket at a ticket reader (Para. 51). '977 validates the accepted ticket by comparing it to data stored on the gaming network (validity of cash-out slips verified by CPU, Para. 49). The attendant then provides a benefit to the user by paying out on the cash-out slip (Para. 49). Regarding the new limitation, the cashout slips can be redeemed at a cashier's station which does not include a gaming machine (Abst., Para. 51). '094 also teaches the ticket issued by a

Art Unit: 3714

gaming machine and presented by the player at the service center. The coded ticket of '094 may be delivered by an automatic teller device in exchange for remitted cash or other form of electronic money. A coded ticket may also be printed by a gaming machine when the player wishes to offload his or her credit balance and/or winnings; the player may redeem his or her credit balance via an automatic teller device, or alternatively may upload the credit on another gaming machine (Abst.). At step 1013 (Fig. 10), when the player wishes to cash out, the gaming machine 600 prints out a coded ticket 100 bearing at least the player's new balance, the machine-readable code 108 and the human-readable verification code 106; the player may then take the coded ticket 100 and redeem the printed credit balance for cash or some form of electronic money at the ATM 500 (Paras. 14, 15, 43, & 44). 441, however, discloses a player tracking card in which a player establishes a player tracking account prior to starting game play. '441 in 4:50-65 discusses the casino issuing a standard player tracking card to the player before the player commences wagering; this account includes identifying information such as name, address, and other information. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have applied the player tracking card and player account of '441 to the combination of '977 and '094. While '977 can be used to track a player without requiring identification, one embodiment of '977 that is analogous to '441 does. '977 in Para. 47 discusses an input being a player identification code reader which is capable of reading a room key or specially encoded identification card, such as one having a magnetic strip, for identifying the player using the slot machine. This identification card is intended to

Art Unit: 3714

permit the casino to keep track of the player and amount of time and/or money played by the identified player. The identification card is furthermore (Para. 47) not intended to provide the player with credit. This modification would have the advantage and effect of positively identifying the player before game play commences, which would serve to reduce fraud on the part of players. The identification card and player account associated with the gaming ticket would also have the advantage of serving to protect the player in the event of a dispute with the casino as outlined in Para. 46 of '977, because the system would be able to verify the amount on the ticket with that stored on the server ('977, Para. 19), and the player's identity would be able to be positively verified as being associated with the account.

17. As to Claim 11: '977 provides winnings in currency (Para. 51).

18. As to Claim 12: The service center of '977 is structured to provide a benefit to the user by providing a new ticket to the user (pre-printed free play coupons, Para. 13).

19. As to Claim 13: The service center of '977 is structured to provide a benefit to the user by adding a benefit to the player account (player receives credit for game play corresponding to amount in account, Para. 12; pre-printed free play coupons represent value redeemable in free plays credited to player's account, Para. 13).

20. As to Claim 14: The service center of '977 is structured to establish a data connection with an ATM network (Para. 20 mentions coupons being dispensed by ATMs as opposed to the cashier station).

Art Unit: 3714

21. As to Claim 15: '094 teaches transferring credit from an ATM account to make money available for a player to use (Para. 41). The player is able to take the ticket printed by the ATM and use it for subsequent play on the gaming machines.

22. As to Claim 21: '977 teaches a method of servicing a player account at a service center coupled to a gaming network on which a plurality of player accounts are stored (Fig. 1, Abst.). '977 establishes a data connection to the gaming network (printouts controlled by central CPU, Para. 13-15). '977 accepts an identification of a user (player identification card, Para. 47). '977 authorizes the user when the information matches the stored user data (Para. 47). '977 accepts a ticket from a user (Para. 20). '977 compares the data from the ticket to ticket data stored on the gaming network (cashier station controlled by central CPU, Para. 20). '977 provides something of value if the data from the ticket matches the stored ticket data (Para. 20). '094 establishes a connection to an ATM network and transfers money to the authorized player's account (Para. 41; account credited, Para. 43; bankcard, Para. 45). '094 also teaches the ticket issued by a gaming machine and presented by the player at the service center. The coded ticket of '094 may be delivered by an automatic teller device in exchange for remitted cash or other form of electronic money. A coded ticket may also be printed by a gaming machine when the player wishes to offload his or her credit balance and/or winnings; the player may redeem his or her credit balance via an automatic teller device, or alternatively may upload the credit on another gaming machine (Abst.). At step 1013 (Fig. 10), when the player wishes to cash out, the gaming machine 600 prints out a coded ticket 100 bearing at least the player's new balance, the machine-readable

code 108 and the human-readable verification code 106; the player may then take the coded ticket 100 and redeem the printed credit balance for cash or some form of electronic money at the ATM 500 (Paras. 14, 15, 43, & 44). 441 discloses a player tracking card in which a player establishes a player tracking account prior to starting game play. '441 in 4:50-65 discusses the casino issuing a standard player tracking card to the player before the player commences wagering; this account includes identifying information such as name, address, and other information.

23. As to Claim 24: '977 provides currency to an authorized employee (Para. 51) and stores a record of providing the currency on the gaming network (complete accounting of player accounts, Para. 19).

24. Claim 23 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over '977, '094, and '595 in view of Sarbin, et al. (U.S. patent 5,179,517 A).

25. As to Claim 23: The combination of '977, '094, and '595 discloses all of the elements of Claims 5 and 23, but does not disclose the player identifier being structured to validate the user as an employee. '517, however, discloses an electronic identification card as being a casino employee identification card (Fig. 6, 94, 8:26-32). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have applied the employee identification card of '517 to the combination of '977, '094, and '595. This could be done by issuing employees their own employee identification cards, which would otherwise be identical to player identification cards except for the codes stored on them. '977 in Para. 20 discusses a Cashier's Station

Art Unit: 3714

where players go to cash in their cash-out slips or tickets; these can be operated by an attendant (Para. 49). One of ordinary skill in the art would appreciate that access to these stations would be preferably restricted to casino employees to prevent fraudulent activity on the part of patrons, or even casino employees not assigned to that particular station or that particular shift. The employee identification card would thus have the advantage of protecting the casino from possible fraud.

Response to Arguments

26. Applicant's arguments filed 03/07/2007 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. The examiner's remarks of 06-13-2008 are incorporated by reference. The applicants' remarks on Pages 6 to 8 generally characterize the claims and the references. As previously explained the ATM system of '977 would necessarily have used PINs (personal identification numbers) to verify that the player is an authorized user of an account. '094 teaches validating the authorized holder of a ticket before giving credit. '094 teaches an ATM with a keypad input which would be capable of accepting a PIN (Para. 37). The player's winnings can be stored in a bank account accessible by an ATM (Para. 41; account credited, Para. 43; bankcard, Para. 45). Any ATM transaction would require a player to be validated by a PIN before the transaction went through. This is evidenced for the gaming arts by Small (U.S. patent 4,699,730 A), Figs. 1 to 7, which show the use of PINS for ATM transactions. Any ATM or other account associated with a player is simply a player account. In any event, Uihlein, et al. (6,409,595 B1), relied on by the presently relied on by the examiner for independent

Art Unit: 3714

Claims 10 and 16 illustrates the obviousness of establishing that a player is an authorized user of a player account before commencing wagering. 441 discloses a player tracking card in which a player establishes a player tracking account prior to starting game play. '441 in 4:50-65 discusses the casino issuing a standard player tracking card to the player before the player commences wagering; this account includes identifying information such as name, address, and other information.

Regarding the applicants' remarks on Page 10, while '977 can be used to track a player without requiring identification, one embodiment of '977 that is analogous to '441 does.

'977 in Para. 47 discusses an input being a player identification code reader which is capable of reading a room key or specially encoded identification card, such as one having a magnetic strip, for identifying the player using the slot machine. This identification card is intended to permit the casino to keep track of the player and amount of time and/or money played by the identified player. The identification card is furthermore (Para. 47) not intended to provide the player with credit. This determination of account status before wagering would have the effect of positively identifying the player before game play commences, which would serve to reduce fraud on the part of players. 094 also teaches the newly cited ticket issued by a gaming machine and presented by the player at the service center. The coded ticket of '094 may be delivered by an automatic teller device in exchange for remitted cash or other form of electronic money. A coded ticket may also be printed by a gaming machine when the player wishes to offload his or her credit balance and/or winnings; the player may redeem his or her credit balance via an automatic teller device, or alternatively may

Art Unit: 3714

upload the credit on another gaming machine (Abst.). At step 1013 (Fig. 10), when the player wishes to cash out, the gaming machine 600 prints out a coded ticket 100 bearing at least the player's new balance, the machine-readable code 108 and the human-readable verification code 106; the player may then take the coded ticket 100 and redeem the printed credit balance for cash or some form of electronic money at the ATM 500 (Paras. 14, 15, 43, & 44). The examiner respectfully disagrees with the applicants as to the claims' condition for allowability.

Conclusion

27. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Matthew D. Hoel whose telephone number is (571) 272-5961. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon. to Fri., 8:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.

28. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Peter Vo can be reached on (571) 272-4690. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 3714

29. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Matthew D. Hoel
Patent Examiner
AU 3714

Peter Vo
Supervisory Patent Examiner
Art Unit 3714

/M. D. H./
Examiner, Art Unit 3714

/Peter DungBa Vo/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3714